



CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY Clinical and Translational Science Collaborative

NEW PILOT FUNDING OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS THE HEALTH CONCERNS AND CONDITIONS OF RURAL OHIO

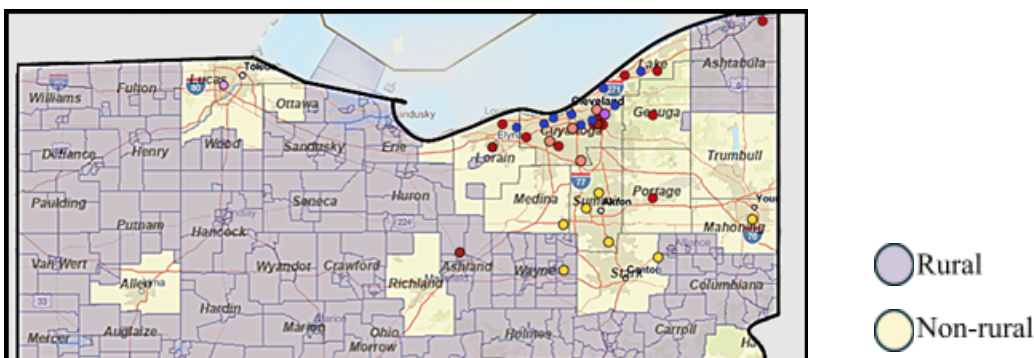
Title:	Timely access to innovations in health outcomes for Rural Ohio
Available Funds:	Up to 4 pilot awards at \$25,000 to \$50,000 each
Funding Period:	April 1, 2026 - March 31, 2027
Application Deadline:	Monday, December 1, 2025 at 11:59 PM
Funding Source:	Clinical and Translational Science Collaborative of Northern Ohio at Case Western Reserve University

The Clinical and Translational Science Collaborative (CTSC) of Northern Ohio at Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) requests applications for pilot research funding to enhance and grow CTSC activities in the area of rural health.

There are particular health conditions prevalent in the rural Midwest in general, and Ohio in particular, that mirror chronic health conditions in rural areas across the nation. Rural populations suffer disproportionately from chronic diseases like heart disease, hypertension, type 2 diabetes, COPD, and others. Access to health care affects timely attention to other health conditions, like cancer, mental illness, and neurological disorders. Early diagnosis and remediation/monitoring of all diseases improve outcomes and lower healthcare utilization. Travel time, access to clinical specialization, including diagnostic equipment and facilities, and pharmacy support are examples of challenges faced by rural populations. Northern Ohio provides a representative environment for expanding research engagement and reproducing the effectiveness of health interventions across various settings applicable to all Americans.

This themed pilot invites projects addressing the health concerns and conditions of rural Ohio. These goals are in concert with the NIH and NCATS Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSA) Program. All are committed to accelerating clinical and translational research to address the significant burden of conditions that affect rural populations.

For this grant, rural is defined by the Federal Register's "[Inclusion of Terrain Factors in the Definition of Rural Area for Federal Office of Rural Health Policy Grants.](#)" The area of focus in the proposal must be both considered rural and within the CTSC of Northern Ohio's catchment area above the blue line (see Figure 1).





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Figure 1: Ohio FORHP rural designations

There are four areas of interest in this Pilot Funding Opportunity:

- 1) Address challenges to participation in clinical research and broader engagement in clinical trials.
- 2) Enhance urban-rural collaborative efforts by strengthening coordination between urban institutional partners and rural community collaborators.
- 3) Develop and implement Point-of-Care and mobile technologies that extend the reach and effectiveness of health interventions across a variety of clinical settings.
- 4) Address the drivers of chronic disease through preventive and therapeutic lifestyle interventions.

Areas of particular interest:

1. innovative use of Artificial Intelligence (AI),
2. demonstrate attention to dissemination and implementation,
3. mobile technologies,
4. decentralized trial with remote monitoring.

Increasing the speed, efficiency, and effectiveness of clinical and translational research will reduce disease burden and address health disparities in rural areas. Persistent variation in key health indicators, such as life expectancy, chronic disease rates, and access to care, reflects the need for more consistent integration of research into practice. Inconsistencies in recruitment and enrollment across clinical studies may limit the broader applicability and operational impact of research findings.

Case Western Reserve University will serve as the fiscal entity through which each award will be distributed and administered. Awardees will receive additional information regarding the disbursement workflow.

Important Details and Requirements:

- 1) Applicants must have a Rural Health-themed pilot consultation with CTSC Pilot Module staff/faculty as they prepare their applications.
 - a. To begin the consultation process, visit <https://sparc.case.edu/> > Grant Development > Grant Writing Consultation OR <https://sparc.case.edu/>>Funding Opportunities>Themed Pilot.
- 2) The CTSC seeks applications from faculty at:
 - Case Western Reserve University,



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- Cleveland Clinic,
 - MetroHealth Medical Center,
 - University Hospitals Cleveland Medical Center,
 - Louis Stokes Cleveland Veterans Administration Medical Center,
 - Northeast Ohio Medical University,
 - University of Toledo
- 3) We intend to award up to four pilot grants, with award amounts of \$25,000 to \$50,000 each.
 - 4) As with all CTSC activities, and to enhance collaborations among partners, proposed studies must include at least two different CTSC institutions OR one CTSC institution and a community partner. Community engagement, including county health departments, is encouraged, and community collaborators should be listed as co-I on the study and help co-design the proposed study.
 - 5) Applications must be submitted electronically no later than **December 1, 2025, at 11:59PM** via InfoReady at <https://cwru.infoready4.com>.
 - 6) Successful applicants will be notified in January 2026, and if all requirements are met, funding could begin **as early as April 1, 2026**.
 - 7) Applications must meet all general requirements unless an exception is noted. Applications not meeting the requirements may be returned and not reviewed.
 - 8) Applicant's project must address the topic areas and other requirements of the funder to be considered for a pilot grant award.
 - 9) Awards will be based on a combination of meritorious proposals and priorities of the funder. Should there be no applications that meet the criteria set, the funder has no obligation to fund an application.
 - 10) This award will allow for one travel exception for a trainee involved in the project to present the research at a national meeting.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Eligible applicants

- Principal Investigators (PIs) must have a PhD, MD, JD, PharmD, PsyD, DNP or equivalent doctoral-level degree and have a faculty appointment at CWRU or one of the CTSC partner institutions, including: University Hospitals, Cleveland Clinic, Veterans Affairs Northeast Ohio Health System, MetroHealth, Northeast Ohio Medical University or the University of Toledo.
- Co-PIs are permitted, but each applicant must submit only one application as PI or co-PI.
- Interested prospective applicants who do not have doctoral-level degrees (e.g., non-clinical staff with master's degrees, undergraduate degrees, high school diplomas, or the equivalent) are highly encouraged to apply by collaborating with a PI.
- The institution of record will be the PI's primary institution. If the application has two co-PIs, one should be designated as the contact PI, and their institution will act as the primary institution of record.
- PI, co-PI(s), and study team members should involve interdisciplinary institutional departments, as appropriate, in the development of their pilot proposal.

IRB

- Studies involving human subjects must have IRB approval by March 1, 2026 before funds will be released and will not change the expectation for significant progress to be made within three-to-six months. The likelihood of gaining IRB approval promptly will be considered as part of the feasibility criteria.



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Budget Considerations

- PI, co-PI(s), and/or study team staff salaries are permitted, including paying community consultants for the execution of the project.
- Indirect costs are not permitted.
- **Allowable Costs:** recruitment materials; rental of UH Mobile Research Unit; study supplies; community member consultant fees; consumable equipment and/or technology with justification for use in the project; space rental fee; food for events specifically outlined in the application.
- **Unallowable costs:** tuition, travel, publication costs, conferences, equipment that is not consumed by the project
- All award funding **must be spent by March 31, 2027**. No-cost extensions (i.e., the project end date will not be extended, nor will the funder add additional funds to cover the extension) will **not** be granted.

APPLICATION PROCESS - PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

Application must be submitted electronically **no later than Monday, December 1, 2025, at 11:59PM** via InfoReady at <https://cwru.infoready4.com>.

1. Schedule and complete the Rural Health-themed pilot consultation with CTSC Pilot Module staff as they prepare their applications.
 - a. Visit <https://sparc.case.edu/> > Grant Development > Grant Writing Consultation OR <https://sparc.case.edu/>>Funding Opportunities>Themed Pilot to begin the consultation process.
2. SPARC is the CTSC's service request system and will issue a Project ID number for the consultation.
3. After scheduling your consultation, the Project ID number issued to your project will also be the ID number used when applying for the Rural Health-themed pilot in the InfoReady system (CWRU grants management platform).
4. Navigate to InfoReady to submit your application: <https://cwru.infoready4.com>

Preparing the Submission

The InfoReady System will require the following information or documents to be provided or uploaded.

Formatting

- Please review the online submission form before preparing your final documents.
- All uploaded documents must be in Portable Document Format (PDF).
- Please use size 11 pt. Arial font with 0.5" margins.
- Maintain margins and adequate spacing between paragraphs and note the maximum length for each document.

Information and Documents

- A short summary of the work directed to the general public (i.e., [plain language summary](#)) (500 characters, including spaces)
- Specific aims (half page, uploaded as a PDF)



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- Significance and urgency, specifically addressing how this project will advance rural health access (maximum half page, uploaded as PDF)
- Research Strategy (maximum two pages, uploaded as PDF) that includes:
 - Study design, hypothesis, expected results.
 - Study population
 - Approach (methods, data collection, measures, analyses)
 - Investigative team
 - Feasibility
 - Dissemination and implementation plan and next steps (i.e., extramural funding)
 - References or URLs (maximum 10 references uploaded as part of the Research Strategy PDF)
- Study timeline and deliverables (applicants must show significant progress within three-to-four months), including plan and timeline for dissemination of research findings and for seeking extramural funding (maximum half page, uploaded as PDF)
- Figures may be included as appendices (maximum two pages total for appendices)
- If human subjects are involved, an approved Institutional Review Board (IRB) or a copy of the IRB application must be included with the application as an uploaded PDF.
- Detailed budget (please download and complete the NIH budget [form](#))
 - **Note:** The fringe rate for staff salaries (if applicable) is the current non-federal rate of 34%.
 - **Note:** There are no Indirect Costs associated with this award.
- Budget justification (provide description and rationale for each expense listed in the budget)
- [NIH-format biosketches](#) for personnel (maximum five pages per biosketch uploaded as a single PDF)
- Letter(s) of support/commitment (as applicable) (maximum five pages, maximum one page per letter uploaded as a single PDF)

Review Process

- Proposals will be reviewed by a scientific review committee comprised of reviewers from each institutional partner, and may include the community at large. CTSC staff will provide administrative oversight throughout the review process to ensure a standardized review process.
- Reviews will be conducted using NIH-style scoring methods
- The committee will take the following into consideration:
 - Clear articulation of the problem being addressed in the proposed project,
 - Demonstration of how the proposed work may directly contribute to developing new knowledge toward addressing rural health conditions and concerns,
 - Significance, innovation, and timeliness,
 - Expertise of the investigative team and evidence of commitment of investigators and stakeholders to collaborate,
 - Feasibility,
 - Evidence of tangible deliverables, a timeline, dissemination, and implementation plans, and plans for future funding,
 - Likelihood of future success,
 - Budget and budget justification,
 - Dissemination of research findings at a CTSC Forum.